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ABSTRACT

This study identified the socio-political factors that affected a tribal community college located in the upper Midwest; it also identified the perceived challenges the college faces in the future. The study used archival data from student files, North Central Accreditation (NCA) reports, board of trustee minutes, historical data, news articles, and other materials. Interviews were conducted with seven people, identified through documents or interviews. A time line of college events was also developed. Descriptive statistics were used to create a profile of the students, faculty, and staff who were representative of the college. Report highlights include: (1) five factors found to affect the development of the college were finances, institutional governance, accreditation, family, and culture; (2) accreditation has consistently been a driving force for the college; (3) the demographic profiles of the students found an increase in female students and GPAs through the years; (4) the demographic profile of the faculty has changed little through the years; and (5) the perceived challenges for the tribal college are funding, developing a four-year program, and continuing cultural education using an intergenerational approach--preservation of the culture and passing this knowledge on to future generations is a priority. (Contains 40 references, 3 tables, and 5 appendices.) (KP)

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A CASE STUDY OF THE SOCIAL-POLITICAL FACTORS THAT HAVE AFFECTED A SELECTED TRIBAL COLLEGE

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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Division of Educational Administration
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ABSTRACT

A Case Study of the Social-Political Factors
That Have Affected a Selected Tribal College

Donna Lehmkuhl, Ed.D., Educational Administration,
University of South Dakota
2000.

Dissertation directed by Dr. Karen Card

Education for Native American people has been tainted with a history of forced education and assimilation into the American educational system. The development of tribal colleges began in 1968 as Native Americans returned to reservations with an education and desired a change for their people. Tribal colleges have been assisting tribes to meet the needs for higher education of Native American people in an environment that is more conducive to the diverse learning styles, and begin an educational process to preserve tribal culture.

This study identified the social-political factors that affected a tribal community college located in the upper Midwest, and identified the perceived challenges the college faces in the future. The study used archival data from student files, NCA reports, board of trustee minutes, historical data, news articles, and other pertinent materials. Interviews were conducted with seven informants identified through documents or interviews. A time line of events of the college was developed. Descriptive statistics were used to develop a profile of the students, faculty, and staff that are representative of the college. A random sample was drawn from four separate years of student files to obtain

information on age, gender, GPA, tribal affiliation, completion rates, and status as full- or part-time students. Faculty and administrative profiles were developed through written documentation.

The five factors found to affect the development of the college were financial, the influence of institutional governance, accreditation, family influence, and cultural impact. Accreditation has consistently been a driving force for the college.

The demographic profiles of the students found an increase in female students and GPAs through the years. There was some discrepancy found between the random sample and NCA reports on the mean age of students, yet the student population would still be described as non-traditional. The demographic profile of the faculty has changed little through the years.

The perceived challenges for the tribal college are funding, developing a four-year program, and continuing cultural education using an intergenerational approach. Preservation of the culture and passing this knowledge on to future generations is a priority.

This abstract of approximately 350 words is approved as to form and content. I recommend its publication.

Signed _____
Professor in Charge

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Tribal colleges began in the United States in 1968 in Arizona with the Navajo Community College, now called Dine Community College. There are now 29 tribal colleges in the United States (Tribal College Journal, 1999) with more being established each year.

Boyer (1997b) identified two social-political events which he felt were key to the founding of tribal colleges. The first was "termination." The termination policy of 1952 was developed to eliminate reservations by allotting tribal lands to individual tribal members. This policy also contained a part that involved the relocation of able-bodied Native American people to locations off reservations (Fixico, 1986). The second event Boyer identified was "self-determination." Self-determination was a policy in which Congress pledged support for programs for Native American people. In 1975 the Self-Determination Act became law. This act funded technical training, staff support for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and allowed for greater tribal control of some federal programs.

World War II, which took place just prior to the termination policy identified by Boyer, was a significant turning point for Native Americans (Boyer, 1997; Hill, 1995; St. Pierre, 1997). Many veterans returned home to their reservations after receiving their post-secondary education to become leaders

in the community, some of whom were instrumental in founding tribal colleges (Hill, 1995).

The land grant status that tribal colleges received in 1994 enabled 29 tribal colleges to receive funding under the second Morrill Act of 1890 (Bigart, 1997). This act provides funding to support instruction in the areas of food and agricultural sciences.

These social-political events contributed to the tribal college movement which began in 1968 with the establishment of Navajo Community College (Stein,1992a; Hill, 1995; Boyer, 1997b; Bigart, 1997). By the early 1970s there were six tribal colleges, which joined together to develop the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) in 1972 (Boyer, 1998; Hill, 1995). The American Indian Higher Education Consortium has served tribal colleges in the role of lobbyist, grant writer, and central clearinghouse of information. The second and third waves of tribal colleges occurred between 1973 and 1978 with the establishment of ten tribal colleges in the second wave and five in the third wave (Stein, 1992b).

Tribal colleges have been able to assist tribes in meeting the needs for higher education for their people in an environment that is more conducive to diverse learning styles. Through these colleges, tribes have been able to begin an educational process to preserve their tribal culture. While these colleges struggle to survive at times, the most important element in motivating staff and faculty is the students (Stein, 1992a). To illustrate this motivation, part of the mission statement of each tribal college is "the will to preserve, enhance and

promote the language and culture of its tribe is central to its existence" (Stein, 1992a, p. 89).

This study focused on one tribal community college that has been in existence for over 20 years, thus creating a history full of a wealth of information. This information was narrowed to extract the social-political factors that have affected the college, thus allowing for parameters to be placed on the study. Social-political factors or events were identified through this study and may include such issues as local and/or federal funding, community issues, tribal issues, and staff or administrative issues. While the primary emphasis was on a qualitative study concerning the history of the college, some quantitative analysis was conducted to develop a profile of students, faculty, and staff that was representative of student enrollment and staffing to give a longitudinal overview.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify the social-political factors that have affected a tribal community college located in the upper Midwest and the challenges the college faces in the future. This study also developed a profile of the students, faculty, and staff that is representative of the selected tribal college. This study developed a time line of events from the founding of the college to the present time. For the purpose of confidentiality for the college, faculty, and students, the college will be referred to as the selected tribal community college for the remainder of this study.

The research questions addressed in this study are as follows:

1. What social-political events have impacted the selected tribal college during the past 20 years?

2. What has been the demographic profile of students, faculty and administration at the selected tribal college during the past 20 years?

3. What are the perceived challenges the selected tribal college faces in the future?

Significance of the Study

This study will add to the small but growing literature about tribal colleges and their impact for Native Americans, both individually and the tribal community. This study provided the selected community college with important data, both historically for their archives, and for recruitment and student retention. The study will add insight to other tribal colleges which are starting out, as a view of the path one tribal college has taken.

Definition of Terms

The definitions listed below were used throughout this study. The researcher, for the purpose of this study, defined the terms without reference citations.

Community College: "Any institution accredited to award the Associate of Arts or the Associate of Science as its highest degree" (Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 5).

Full-time Student: A student who attends college attempting 12 or more credits a term/semester, must earn 10 credits per term/semester (selected tribal college handbook, 1982-83, 1999-2001).

Half-time Student: A student who attends college attempting 7-12 credits a term/semester, must earn five credits per term/semester (selected tribal college handbook, 1982-83).

Mainstream institution: A public or private institution of higher education that has been in existence for a long period of time and is part of the existing system of higher education.

Native American: A person who is a member of a recognized Indian tribe or nation by individual states or the United States government. For the purpose of this study the person is an enrolled tribal member who is eligible to receive benefits from the United States government through tribal programs. The term Native American is interchangeable with American Indian or Indian in the literature.

Non-traditional Student: A student who has a break in education between twelfth grade and higher education of more than five years or a student who has dependent children or a spouse. This term also includes the student who commutes to college on a regular basis (selected tribal college president).

Part-time Student: A student who attends college attempting six or fewer credits a term/semester, must earn all credits per term/semester (selected tribal college handbook, 1982-83).

Retention: Keeping a student in college continuously each semester from the time they begin a program to completion of that program.

Social-political: Events or factors created by societal and or political influences that have an impact on the tribal community college. These events

may include, but are not limited to the following: funding, administration, business opportunity, political upheaval, etc. These may be events at the local, state or federal level.

Stepping Out: Taking a break in education often to meet financial or family needs, yet returning at a later date to take additional courses or complete a program (Davis, 1992).

Tribal College: A college that was chartered by the tribe and funded through a recognized tribe of Native Americans. Stein (1992b) stated that the differences between tribal and non-Indian community colleges "lie in funding sources, jurisdiction, and cultural factors, not educational goals" (p. 6). All tribal colleges began as two year institutions, some have begun to offer four-year programs and a few offer master's degrees (Boyer, 1997b). The term Tribal College is interchangeable with Tribal Community College in this research.

Tribal Community College: A community college that was chartered by the tribe and funded through a recognized tribe of Native Americans. The tribal community college is not governed by the State Board of Regents but through a Board of Trustees representing the tribe.

Limitations

The limitations inherent in case study research are issues with reliability and validity. The use of multiple sources of information and verifying will reduce problems in these areas. This study was conducted in the upper Midwest with a tribal college; there were no other colleges involved for purposes of comparison, thus reducing the ability to generalize the research to other tribal

colleges except through secondary analysis. Due to the fact that tribal colleges are tribally controlled, independently of one another, the data collected in this study can lend assistance to other colleges, yet can not be generalized to other colleges as being set criteria for how a tribal college must function.

A final limitation of this study is concerned with data collection of student profiles and retention data. Students completed an enrollment form each quarter or semester they attended the college; thus, there was not a clear method to determine when a student began and completed his/her education at the college.

Assumptions

The assumptions from the onset of this study are as follows:

1. The individuals interviewed would give honest responses to the questions.

2. The sample drawn was representative of the student populations for the representative years.

3. There was sufficient written documentation to support oral data.

Organization of Study

Chapter 1 of this dissertation is the introduction of the case study with a brief overview of the significance of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of related literature that first identifies issues that have affected education in the United States. There is a comparison of tribal community colleges to non-tribal community colleges, and a brief discussion of issues that have been identified as unique to tribal colleges. There is a brief section on retention issues for

Native Americans. Chapter 3 addresses the procedures that were used for conducting the research. Chapter 4 presents the findings from the various methods of data collection used, as described in the previous chapter. Chapter 5 contains a summary, the conclusions, and implications of this research.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Selected Literature and Research

This chapter is a review of literature pertaining to the relationship between Native Americans and higher education in the United States. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive overview of the history of education in the United States as it relates to Native Americans. This chapter will begin with a look at the founding of higher education in the United States and issues that have impacted education. While this is not directly related to Native American higher education the trends in education have an indirect impact. The chapter will continue with the development of tribal colleges in the U.S. and their perceived impact on Native Americans and higher education.

History of Education

America was founded on the belief that all "men" are created equal. While this has not been the case in the past, and is still somewhat questionable, this belief has influenced higher education and society in general. A great deal of diversity in education, which some, including Birnbaum (1983/1991) feel is a strength in education, has been created by this belief. Birnbaum cited Stadtman, who identified what he felt were many benefits of diversity, such as increasing choices available for learners, responding to pressures from society, and matching needs, goals and learning styles of individual learners (Birnbaum, 1983/1991).

There have been numerous social-political events or forces that have affected higher education in the United States. One of the first and most

important of these forces affecting higher education has been religion. While religion helped found this country, it has also impacted higher education. Religious groups, in part for the purpose of educating individuals to go into the ministry, first founded many colleges and universities. There are still many private institutions with religious affiliations.

A major social-political event driving higher education was World War II. In 1947, after World War II had ended, higher education began to grow (Trow, 1989/1991). As individuals returned home from the war, many needed to be retrained or educated for new professions. Having served their country, the government in return provided them with assistance for education with the Veteran's Readjustment Act, otherwise known as the G.I. Bill, creating growth in higher education. This was also the beginning of the baby boom era which would lead to increased enrollments in the 1960s and 1970s as these children began graduating from high school and entering college. Many of these individuals became first generation college students.

In the 1970s there was a large increase in the number of older and non-traditional students, part-time students, and women who entered higher education (Trow, 1989/1991). During the early 1970s the Vietnam War involved large numbers of U.S. troops, and some individuals entered college to avoid the war. After the veterans returned home, many took advantage of the G.I. Bill once again, to develop career skills, as many of these veterans had been drafted prior to developing these skills. The G.I. Bill was substantial enough to entice veterans to use the program. The number of part-time students

increased due to older or non-traditional students entering higher education who held jobs or had other responsibilities in order to support themselves and/or their families. This allowed for students to receive higher education benefits while still maintaining some of their accustomed lifestyle, since residential living was not appropriate for everyone.

The increasing number of women in higher education was influenced by many social-political factors. The number of women in the workforce increased during World War II when men went to war and women had to enter the labor force to support the war and to keep families going. When men returned from the war, many women returned to their homes, and the economy increased which helped create the baby boom era. These children were raised in a time of change in our country, when increasing numbers of females sought self-fulfillment outside of the home. There had also been a large increase in the divorce rate after World War II which has continued to the present, increasing the need for women to have an education to support families. Women today have also had more positive role models, thus increasing the number of women in college even more. Today, women make up over 55% of college enrollment (Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac, 1999).

Trow (1989/1991) felt that the 1819 Supreme Court decision concerning Dartmouth College had major effects on how higher education has been shaped. This ruling forbid the state legislature from becoming involved with the running of a private college. This ruling has allowed private colleges and

universities to remain independent from state control, thus increasing the diversity in higher education.

Market influences have been a major force in higher education. Our society holds a belief that education will increase socialization; create a more empathetic society, thereby increasing philanthropy; and reduce "barbarism" (Trow, 1989/1991). Research has found that higher education increases citizenship, which leads to increased socialization (Bowen, 1977/1991). For many years it has been said that a college degree is needed to succeed in the U.S. This appears to be a belief among many people, thus increasing the drive for higher education.

Financial aid has impacted enrollment in higher education. When financial aid such as grants has been highly available, more people have been able to attend college. When this funding has been reduced, a hardship has resulted for many students. States fund approximately one-third of the cost of higher education, students provide another third, and the institutions provide around 15% percent from endowments and other sources. The government provides approximately 13%, yet this number increases to 23% when aid given directly to students through grants or loans is added in, thus reducing student contributions (Trow, 1989/1991).

In his article, "Goals: The Intended Outcomes of Higher Education," Howard Bowen (1977/1991) cited a quotation with an unknown source, "Marx sought to change the world through changing social institutions, Jesus through changing the hearts of men. Higher education tries to do both" (p. 54). The

goal or mission of higher education is not clearly defined, yet encompasses such ideas as growth of the whole person (Bowen, 1977/1991) and the growth of society. Education provides the basis upon which an individual can expand through life experiences. Education is a logical way to develop positive experiences through Erik Erikson's psycho-social stages of development. Erikson's final stage of Generativity vs. Stagnation occurs when a person looks back over their life to see what has been accomplished. For a person with higher education, this stage has an increased chance of being positive, having met the goals of higher education such as citizenship and life-long learning.

Bowen (1977/1991) identified three aspects of life that higher education impacts. The first is cognitive learning, expanding one's knowledge; second is affective development which addresses areas of morals and values, religion and emotional issues; and the third is practical competence, which is identified through elements of daily living such as citizenship, family life, lifestyle choices, and work.

These social-political forces have had an impact on higher education in the United States by impacting the structure, mission, and function of education. As society adapts to these forces changes occur at all levels of society, including higher education.

Higher Education for Native Americans

These same social-political forces have had an impact on education for Native American people both directly and in more indirect ways. American society's commitment to the European American culture and lack of

understanding of other cultures has created problems for Native American education. In a special report published in 1989 by the Carnegie Foundation entitled Tribal Colleges, Shaping the Future of Native America, Ernest Boyer made the statement, "Tribally controlled colleges can be understood only in the historical context of Indian education and in the spiritual role they play in bringing renewal to their people" (p. xi).

The Henrico Proposal in 1618 was the beginning of European English style education for Native Americans (Stein, 1992b). Christian organizations began work to "civilize" Native Americans beginning in colonial times. "With the founding of Harvard College and other Ivy League institutions came an accompanying mission to educate the Indians" (Hill, 1995, p. 32). Of the first 20 students from Harvard's Indian school, only one student survived to go through commencement (Stein, 1992b). The Civilization Act of 1816 provided religious groups with funding to educate and Christianize Indians (Boyer, 1997b). Problems arose with this education concerning what these individuals were supposed to do with the education when they returned to their tribes, as it did not fit into their culture and lifestyle. While this was not seen as a problem to the European Americans, it was for the Native Americans and their culture.

The 1880s marked the beginning of the "Reservation Era" when most tribes were forced from their homelands and onto lands that were much smaller and not as useful (Hill, 1995). This created problems for many tribes, especially those who were traditionally nomadic and did not possess the skills necessary for a sedentary existence.

During the late 19th century and early 20th century, it was felt that Indian-controlled education would not facilitate the melting pot theory of one American society, so it was the duty of the European American people to provide a proper education (Boyer, 1997b). The first school developed just for the education of Native Americans, the Carlisle Indian School, was started in 1879 to Americanize Native Americans by immersing them in "our civilization" (Boyer, 1997b; Hill 1995; Stein 1992b). Carlisle and other Indian schools were boarding schools that deliberately removed Indian children from their homes and families, and placed them in the European American culture with no support. These schools did not allow students to speak in their native language, their hair was cut to a European American style, and traditional clothing was exchanged for a more "American" style. After a time Carlisle and other Indian schools were determined to be too far from families so schools were developed closer to communities. These schools were plagued with reports of abuse and mistreatment (Stein, 1992b, Hill, 1995). In 1934 the Indian Reorganization Act was passed, and by 1935 there were 515 Native American students in higher education in the U.S. (Hill, 1995).

World War II was a significant time for Native American Veterans who took advantage of the G.I. Bill (Hill, 1995; St. Pierre, 1997). Many of these individuals returned to their reservations after receiving their education to become leaders in the community, some of whom were instrumental in founding the tribal colleges (Hill, 1995).

Boyer (1997b) identified two social-political events which he felt were key to the founding of tribal colleges. The first was "termination." Termination was a policy developed in 1952 to eliminate reservations by giving the land to tribal members. With this plan was a relocation program that moved unemployed Native Americans from the reservations to large cities. These individuals lacked job skills and support systems and many eventually returned to the reservations. During this period six tribes were terminated from the government rolls (Hill, 1995).

The second social-political event Boyer (1997b) identified was self-determination. This policy came about in 1968 and has continued since. With this policy, Congress pledged support for programs for Native American people. In 1975 the Self-Determination Act became law. This act funded technical training, staff support for BIA, and allowed for greater tribal control of some federal programs.

These social-political events attributed to the tribal college movement which began in 1968 with the establishment of Navajo Community College (Hill 1995, Stein 1992a, Boyer 1997b, Bigart, 1997). By the early 1970s there were six tribal colleges, which joined together to develop the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) in 1972 (Boyer, 1998; Hill, 1995).

The tribal colleges have been able to assist tribes in meeting the need for higher education for their people in an environment that was more conducive to the learning styles that might be present. Tribal colleges were also found to be the ideal place to begin an educational process to preserve tribal culture.

Mainstream institutions of higher education have not always provided for the educational needs of Native American populations. According to Boyer (1997b), although opportunities with grants and scholarships were available, few Native American students remained in higher education. In 1957, 2000 native students enrolled, yet only 66 native students graduated in 1961. Many students returned home after their freshman year. While access to higher education existed, success was not guaranteed. The attrition rate was estimated at 75% in 1970 according to Fuchs and Havinghurst, reported by Boyer.

Concern with the struggles Native American students faced in higher education led to the tribal colleges (Boyer, 1997b). While these colleges struggle to survive at times, the most important element in motivating staff and faculty is the students (Stein 1992a). Part of the mission statement of each tribal college is "the will to preserve, enhance and promote the language and culture of its tribe is central to its existence" (Stein 1992a, p. 89).

As Stein (1992b) compared tribal community colleges to non-Indian community colleges, he summed up the similarities and differences very clearly. He stated:

> Though there is visible separation between non-Indian community colleges and tribally controlled community colleges, or TCCs, their functions are much more similar than different. Both strive to serve their communities as comprehensive institutions providing programs which respond to community and student needs. Their differences lie in

funding sources, jurisdiction, and cultural factors, not educational goals. (p.6)

To expand on Stein's thoughts, both types of community colleges try to meet the needs of their communities as is addressed consistently in readings from The American Community College (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Students' needs are a focus at both types of colleges.

Family support is important to all young adults when they leave home for college, yet it is important to look at the values of our culture when we consider how a person will adjust. At the RETAIN 98 conference in Flagstaff AZ (April 1998), in the session "Retaining Native American College Students", Charlotte Babcock identified differences in the way the European American culture looks at growth through the education system as linear. She identified the way children move through schools up to college, growing in independence and being on their own, then moving into the world of careers and being independent of their nuclear or extended family. She then illustrated the Native American way that a person is involved with their family and community throughout their life and how this needs to fit in with the college experience to make it successful for the student (appendix B).

Some social-political differences between tribal and non-tribal colleges lie in the issues of the tribes being sovereign nations. Tribal colleges do not fall under the same rules that non-tribal colleges do, yet many tribal colleges are accredited institutions following the same guidlines. Ambler (1998) questioned when program evaluations and assessments are completed, how tribal colleges

can be compared fairly to Bible colleges and urban community colleges. There are many differences, including both location and funding. Funding for tribal colleges has not been as stable through the years (Boyer, 1997b). This lack of adequate funding has kept tribal colleges on the edge, not knowing at times if they will remain open in the coming month.

Retention of Native American Students in Higher Education

Retention is a growing issue in higher education as funding tightens, and is attached to the number of students served. The various ways retention is measured creates very different outcomes. The typical measurement of retention only looks at the incoming class and tracks the class for four to six years to determine the length of time to graduation. Then the size of the graduating class is compared to the size of the incoming class four years prior to determine how many of those students graduated. This does not account for transfer students or those who take a break in their education. As Stein (1992a) discussed, when looking at retention and students in the tradition manner described, the retention rate for tribal colleges at 45 % is not good. Yet when you look at it differently and look at students who "stop-out" or take a break in their education and return later to finish, the retention rate goes up to 75 - 80 % (Stein, 1992a).

Stopping out is taking a break in the education process. The term stepping out has also been used (Davis, 1992). These terms are used rather than dropping out because they have less of a negative connotation attached to them and these terms are more accurate in describing the circumstances.

When looking at tribal college enrollments, the Carnegie survey reported by Boyer (1997b) found that the majority of students are female (70%), are older than traditional students, and often have children. Boyer (1995) supported these data in previous work, as did Stein (1992a) and Hill (1995). These women are looking for an education to assist them with a way to get off or stay off welfare (Boyer, 1995), yet must take time during their education to care for family by either working or caring for a family member.

The location and mission of the college both have an impact on student retention rates at community colleges. Tribal colleges are located on reservations where a majority of their students live. Since a majority of the students are non-traditional women, many who are mothers, the location allows these individuals to stay in their home communities with their support systems. This assists in reducing the costs of the education since students do not have to move and reduces stress by maintaining support systems. Tinto (1998) discussed the importance of family in the retention of Native American students and the fact that family support is a key part of a student's success or failure in higher education. As stated earlier, part of the mission of each tribal college is "to preserve, enhance, and promote the language and culture of its tribe" (Stein, 1992a, p. 89). This is a part of the education that is not available at other public institutions.

Although 20% of all persons hold bachelor's degrees, only about 9% of American Indians hold bachelor's degrees (Dingman, Mroczka & Brady, 1995). The college graduation rate for Native Americans who finish within in six years

is 33% (Smith, 1995). The graduation rate from high school is also not proportional to the general population (Henderson, 1991; Dingman, Mroczka & Brady, 1995; Davis, 1992; Backes, 1993; Appleson, 1994; Hurlburt, Kroeker, & Gade, 1991; Tate, & Schwartz, 1993; Tierney, 1995). To better illustrate the dropout rate, Tierney (1995) gave an example that if one hundred students entered the ninth grade, of those only sixty will graduate from high school, around twenty will go on to post-secondary education and of those twenty, three will graduate with a four-year degree (p.4).

Learning styles have been addressed as one possible reason for low enrollments in mainstream insitutions. Backes (1993) and Sorknes (1995) both have studied learning styles of Native American students to see if there were differences between Native American and Non-Native American students. Both found there to be differences with the use of qualitative and quantitative research. Dingman, Mroczka, and Brady (1995) looked at dropout rates and then looked at tests that are traditionally used to predict success in higher education. It was felt that many of the tools that are used to test intelligence are not culturally relevant for minorities. Dingman found that the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC) would be one valid assessment tool that could identify potential in Native American children. Brokenleg (1983) also identified this assessment tool as a potential possibility for use with Lakota children when he conducted research for his dissertation twelve years earlier. Although this research is not new, it hasn't been used widely to change teaching styles until recently. Traditional higher education methods have

included the use of lecture format and objective assessments that are not conducive to all learning styles.

Nora and Cabrera (1996), and Hurlburt, Kroeker, and Gade (1991) found that Native American students were not prepared academically for college and that they possessed poor study habits. Boyer (1990) also cited this as a problem.

In public institutions there is a belief that students arrive prepared for the educational experience they are embarking on. When students are not prepared, remedial courses are required. These courses tend to have a negative connotation attached to them and students experience difficulty in higher-level courses, which then sets students up for failure at the next level. Once a student experiences failure, self-esteem goes down and some students will leave higher education.

Tierney (1995) identified 10 principles of good practice that he felt were culturally relevant and would help with retention of Native American students in non-tribal higher education.

1. Develop a mission - If the university cares about Native American students and diversity, the mission statement should reflect this.

2. Faculty orientation and development - Faculty need training on how to teach in general and how to teach diverse populations. There should be faculty enrichment programs for working with and understanding diverse cultural backgrounds. The faculty should also reflect diversity.

3. High expectations - Expectations should be communicated, and goals should be attainable.

4. Cooperation, not competition - Encourage cooperation rather than competition among students.

5. Synthesis - Students learn better in classes that integrate materials rather than isolate knowledge or experiences.

6. Active learning - Learning needs to be active rather than passive.

7. Assessment - frequent positive feedback in a timely manner is better for students. With this method they are able to learn from their mistakes and apply the skill again correctly.

8. Diversity - Allow students opportunities to participate in cultural awareness experiences. This will increase critical thinking skills if experiences are positive.

9. Out of class learning - make learning not only active but also experiential. Out of class practical experience provide more inclusive learning experiences.

10. Role models - Students should have role models in the faculty that they can look up to. A diverse faculty and university will provide this if it is their mission.

When providing materials for faculty and student development it is important not to perpetuate three assumptions about Native Americans (Braithwaite, 1997). These are (1) that all Indians are plains Indians, there are over 500 tribes in the United States; (2) that all Indians are spiritual and/or

medicine men, many Native Americans are Christian with the same spirituality as any European American; and (3) that all Indians are poverty stricken and/or alcoholics (p. 21). These are stereotypes that have developed and persisted.

Family support has also been identified in research as being an important factor to student retention (Davis, 1992; Degen, 1985; Dodd, Garcia, Meccage & Nelson, 1995; Minner, Bizardi, Arthur, Chischille, Holiday, Pyron, Rezzonico, & Yellowhair, 1995; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Tierney, 1995). Families need to be active participants in education. They need to provide on-going support throughout the family for the student, and expectations must be clear and communicated, not pressured.

Advising is an area that is often neglected in higher education. It is not often truly valued as a critical area and is ranked third after research and teaching. Faculty at tribal colleges are open and willing to talk with students and help them in ways extending beyond the classroom or office (Braithwaite, 1997; Boyer, 1990; Patterson-Cross & Shortman, 1995). In data gathered from the Carnegie Foundation survey that Boyer (1997a) reported in a separate article, he stated that "nothing matters more than the quality of teaching" (p. 37). He stated that Native American students found teachers supportive, caring and accessible.

Braithwaite (1997) encouraged communication between faculty and students. He felt that faculty may need to take the responsibility to initiate communication with students who come from tribal colleges. He also stated that it is important to take the communication outside of the classroom and that

this would help to establish a relationship between the faculty and Native American students. Braithwaite's second suggestion was to respect cultural differences. He felt that respecting students will facilitate a sense of trust so students will know that they can talk with faculty.

These aspects are all critical to student success in higher education. The principles that Tierney and Braithwaite address are important throughout higher education as we address student retention issues and the success of tribal colleges.

Boyer (1990) identified six criteria that he felt identified quality in a tribal college. Tribal colleges are different from other institutions of higher education in how they are organized, what they teach, and how they teach. These differences create unique challenges for the tribal college, yet many colleges have welcomed these challenges. The six criteria for a tribal college to achieve quality are as follows:

1 The good tribal college must encourage a smooth transition for students entering their institutions.

2. Academic and social support must be offered to all students .
3. Must offer all students a general education that provides skills for life.
4. Should emphasize good teaching and reward good teachers.
5. Must clearly define its relationship with the tribal government.
6. Evaluate student outcomes. (pp. 13-17)

Carnegie Foundation's Recommendations

In a special report by Paul Boyer (1997b) in the Carnegie Foundation report "Native American Colleges – Progress and Prospects," ten recommendations for action to support tribal colleges were made as a challenge as we enter the twenty-first century. The report identified that while the colleges are tribally controlled, the ability to grow is determined by socio-political issues such as federal budget policies and the current attitude toward Native Americans. The report was written from the analysis of research conducted by the Carnegie Foundation in 1995. The recommendations made by Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation in 1997 follow through the remainder of this section.

Boyer identified that while funding from the Tribally Controlled Community College Act went up to $3,178 per student in the early 1990s, which was a time of growth for the colleges, by 1995 the rate was at $2,900 per student. The federal government is the only consistent source of financial support for tribal colleges.

> First, we once again urgently recommend that the federal government adequately support tribal colleges by providing the full funding authorized by congress for the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act. Specifically, we recommend that the $5,820 authorized per student be appropriated and that, from this point on, federal appropriations keep pace with the growth of Indian student enrollment. (p. 76)

In 1994 tribal colleges achieved Land Grant status (Bigart, 1997; Boyer, 1997b). Tribal colleges receive a payment each year from an endowment fund. Boyer and Carnegie would like to see the other Land Grant institutions support the tribal colleges through partnerships, which help with federal programs and agricultural extension. Another important aspect of Land Grant status is the view that land is connected to cultural, spiritual, and economic issues.

The condition of facilities at many tribal colleges is inadequate. Many campuses are considered makeshift and there is a lack of adequate supplies.

Cooperation between tribal and non-Indian schools has increased through articulation agreements, faculty exchanges, and research projects. The Carnegie Foundation and Boyer (1997b) recommended that institutions take the next step by building relationships between presidents, and beginning new innovative programs.

> Fourth, we urge that connections between tribal colleges and non-Indian higher education institutions grow even stronger. We recommend that mainstream colleges and universities continue to work with tribal colleges, joining in partnerships that benefit both institutions. (p.85)

All tribal colleges teach their native languages, and most offer courses concerning the history and culture of their tribes. Although these classes are considered important and should be expanded, there is a lack of funding to further expand the programs at most campuses. The Carnegie Foundation

urges foundations and government to help in the preservation of language and cultures that are feared may be lost.

> Fifth, we recommend that tribal colleges continue to expand their important work in preserving the arts, philosophy, science, and religious studies of their tribes. Specifically, we urge foundations and government agencies to fund programs that allow colleges to study and teach this essential knowledge. (p. 88)

Encourage tribal and non-Indian colleges to use technology. They suggest funding for three years of a telecommunications project to support the expansion of its base at participating colleges and to develop and share more courses.

The Carnegie report encourages agencies to fund or support professional growth for faculty (Boyer, 1997b). Tribal colleges need to increase the number of Native American faculty. Boyer's research has found that only 50% of faculty at tribal colleges are Native American on most campuses. Some tribal colleges have begun programs that fund future education for a number of students with the understanding that these students return to teach. One Native American tribe provides a loan forgiveness program for Native students who return to tribal colleges (p. 92).

AIHEC has been able to hire staff and purchase a building close to Washington D.C. While this has been positive growth for AIHEC, they have not been able to fulfill the original intent of the consortium. There are many more needs that must be filled.

The American Indian College Fund is considered one of the successes of the tribal college movement. Most colleges have endowments that they are able to draw on for scholarships and building needs. Tribal colleges also have endowment funds, but they are much smaller. The American Indian College Fund (AICF) has created a bit more stability for tribal colleges by giving an endowment each year. The Carnegie Foundation urges support of this fund so that the endowments to the colleges can increase to meet needs. The AICF also has a second endowment that supports Native American Studies at each campus.

Tribal College Journal has grown to become a serious scholarly forum. It is targeted at the tribal colleges, yet offers the most insights available to all about the activities of tribal colleges. This journal is professionally developed and employs a small staff.

Summary

Research indicates that tribal colleges are meeting the needs of tribes across the country. While there are low numbers of Native American students who graduate from predominately "white" colleges and universities across the country, the number of graduates from tribal colleges is much greater. Boyer's research on tribal colleges, with the assistance of the Carnegie Foundation, brought increased awareness across the United States of issues that are faced by tribal colleges. The recommendations made in the Carnegie report urges government, corporations, non-Indian institutions, and individuals to become more involved to insure the growth of tribal colleges. The study of one tribal

college will be addressed in the following chapters to gain a greater understanding of the socio-political issues that have impacted the college to date and to identify issues that will have a perceived impact on the college in the future.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Chapter 3 begins with a brief review of the statement of purpose and the research questions that were addressed in this study. This chapter continues with a description of methodology for the review of the relevant literature, the population and sample, the research methodology used, data collection and analysis, and a summary.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify the social-political factors that have affected a tribal community college located in the upper Midwest and to address challenges the college faces in the future. This study developed a time line from the founding of the college to the present time, as well as developing a demographic profile of the selected tribal college.

The research questions that were addressed in this study are as follows:

1. What social-political events have impacted the selected tribal college during the past 20 years?

2. What has been the demographic profile of students, faculty and administration at the selected tribal college during the past 20 years?

3. What are the perceived challenges the selected tribal college faces in the future?

Review of Related Literature and Research

A comprehensive review of literature was conducted to collect relevant research and data concerning higher education, community colleges, tribal colleges, and student retention related to minority students. The review of literature includes the following sources: Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE), Resources in Education (RIE), Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI), PALS indexes, and electronic media. These references were found in the I.D. Weeks Library located on the campus of the University of South Dakota, Vermillion. Infotrac and other search engines were accessed, journals including Tribal College Journal of American Higher Education, and Journal of American Indian Education were also used, and other additional references were obtained through Hilton M. Briggs Library, located on the campus of South Dakota State University in Brookings, and through the use of interlibrary loan. Some references were obtained from the library at the selected tribal college. A few of the references are part of the personal collection of the researcher. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (4th ed.) (1994) was used throughout this manuscript.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was the selected college, which was inclusive of the students, faculty, and staff who have worked at or attended the selected college, as well as the tribe who sponsors the college. These people

were found through written documentation about the college and through personal interviews.

Methodology

This research project utilized a case study approach. "A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (Merriam, 1998, p. 27). Case studies are useful in education when little research has been conducted and when you are looking at the process of a phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). One characteristic of the case study is that it is a bounded system by time, place, or both (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998), thus increasing the quality of data and control over the substance.

Descriptive case study allowed for a rich and thick description of the tribal college in this study. According to Merriam (1998) "a case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved" (p. 19). Merriam reported in her writings that Olson developed a list in 1982 of aspects of descriptive research. Many of these aspects are present in this research project. The aspects of descriptive case studies that Olson found as stated. Case studies:

- illustrate the complexities of a situation...
- have the advantage of hindsight yet can be relevant in the present.
- show the influence of personalities on the issue.
- show the influence of passage of time on the issue...
- include vivid material...

- obtain information from a wide variety of sources.
- cover many years and describe how the preceding decades led to a situation.
- present information in a wide variety of ways. (pp. 30-31)

This case study was bounded by place. It covered over a 20-year period of the selected tribal colleges history from its beginning to the present time. Multiple sources of information were used to gather data. This study utilized existing data on the college from student files, North Central Accreditation (NCA) reports, Board of Trustee minutes, historical data, news articles, and other pertinent materials found. In 1995 the Carnegie Foundation conducted a follow-up study on tribal colleges from research that was conducted in 1989. Data from the 1995 research were also utilized in this project. Interviews were conducted with seven key informants using a snowball effect to determine the number of interviews that would be needed to collect the data. Additional information was obtained as needed from other key informants including the registrar and archivist.

Data Collection

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized. The use of a case study augmented by the quantitative data being collected provided an in-depth view of the college that will be of value to the college in the upcoming years.

Qualitative data included multiple sources of data collection. Written documents including college catalogs, newspaper articles, North Central

Association reports, graduation lists, Minutes from Board of Trustee meetings, and other data accessible through the college archivist were reviewed.

Informant interviews were conducted to explore further issues and questions raised from document analysis and student information. Interviews were conducted with seven key individuals at the community college. A snowball effect was used to determine who would be interviewed and the number of interviews to be conducted. These interviews included teaching faculty, past and present administrative staff, past students, and a former newspaper editor who is now employed at the college. Data gained from written materials and through the first interviews determined the number and individuals that were interviewed. The college president was one of the first people interviewed in the interview process.

The interviews were semi-structured using material from Boyer's (1990) article identifying six criteria for a college of quality, and information from the recommendations made by Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation in 1997 for the interview with the president. A sample of the structured questions used is found in Appendix C. Another set of general questions were developed for the other interviews conducted. A sample of these questions may be found in Appendix D. Additional questions were generated from the interview process and the role each individual had in the college. Follow-up interviews were conducted as necessary. These interviews provided the researcher with data necessary to tell the story of the selected tribal college and what forces have influenced the college through the years. Specific questions were built through the research

process and some required follow-up interviews. Five of the interviews were tape recorded and transcribed for accuracy. The researcher conducted all of the interviews. Two interviews were conducted using e-mail and telephone communication. Individuals interviewed were given the opportunity to review written material for accuracy and as a means of member checking for validity.

Student Profiles

Quantitative data were collected concerning student demographics and retention rates to develop a student profile. Forty students' records from four different years, 1983, 1988, 1993, and 1997 (160 students) were reviewed to determine trends in demographics of students. The demographics that were reviewed included: age of students, gender, tribal affiliation, and whether these students were considered full- or part-time according to the standards set by the college. The students' grade point averages and program were reviewed, and whether they obtained a degree along with the year in which it was obtained.

Students were chosen using the enrollment forms from the fall quarter/semester of each selected academic year. The selected tribal college changed from a quarter system to a semester system in 1993. A random numbers table was used to draw the sample of students. Each semester students are required to complete an application/course enrollment form. These applications are compiled into book form as part of the verification process for the number of students enrolled each semester and their tribal affiliations. From these books the random numbers table was used to draw a sample of 40 students from each of the years 1983, 1988, 1993, and 1997. If a

student dropped one or more courses, or withdrew completely from the college, the student's enrollment form was still on file. This was considered as a limitation to the process when gathering data. If a student dropped courses that would change their status as full- or part-time student, this was noted. If a student withdrew from college completely for the quarter/semester, another number was used to replace this student. It was noted how many students were drawn to achieve a sample of 40 students per year. After drawing the sample of students, individual files were examined to gather information on graduation, GPA, and transfer information that pertains to this study.

From the 1992-1993 academic year to the present, student information has been kept on computer files and in hard copy form. Data collection for the 1993 and 1997 years were obtained from the computer data. A random numbers table was used once again following the same procedure as prior, with the exception of accessing the computer files rather than the paper files. The data collected were the same as from the paper files. After the data were gathered, names were removed for confidentiality.

Information found in the NCA reports was also be utilized. These data supplemented the data found through student records.

Faculty and Administration Profiles

Faculty profiles were found in documentation from the college for the years that NCA reports were available, and in the interview process. Documentation was reviewed to obtain data on educational levels, employment

as full- or part-time faculty, and tribal affiliation. The data from the different years were compared to identify changes or trends in faculty. Administration profiles were found in archival data of NCA reports, news articles and other documentation, and supplemented with interview research.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred during the spring semester 2000. Consent from the selected tribal college administrators was obtained prior to research inception (Appendix A). Written documentation was reviewed prior to and during the interview process.

Data Analysis

A triangulation of multiple sources of data was used to identify events that were determined as significant to the selected tribal college. Events or factors identified as significant were identified by more than one informant and through written documentation.

Research question one, "What social-political events have impacted the selected tribal college in the past twenty years?" was identified through analysis of written documentation such as NCA reports, board of trustee minutes, newspaper articles, college catalogs, and through individuals interviewed. After the initial analysis, the events that were identified were reviewed with the key informants to verify that all the socio-political events were recorded accurately in the analysis.

Research question two, "What has been the demographic profile of students, faculty and administration at the selected tribal college during the past

20 years?" was identified through analysis of written documentation such as records, catalogs, graduation records, reports and interviews. The data gathered from the four separate years were reviewed to identify changes or trends that have taken place during the past 20 years. Descriptive statistics were generated using SPSS. This material was supplemented with data from written documentation.

Research question three, "What are the perceived challenges the selected tribal college faces in the future?" was identified through key informant interviews and recent reports and studies that focus on tribal colleges and the challenges that they face. After the initial analysis, the perceived challenges were shared with the key informants to verify that all of the perceived challenges were recorded accurately.

CHAPTER 4

Findings

This study focused on the social-political factors that have affected the selected tribal college during its development to the present time, and identify the issues that were perceived as challenges for the future of the college. This research was conducted during the spring of 2000. At the beginning of this chapter is a brief overview of the college to provide the reader with background information. This chapter describes the results of the study. Data was gathered and analyzed to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What social-political events have impacted the selected tribal college during the past 20 years?

2. What has been the demographic profile of students, faculty and administration at the selected tribal college during the past 20 years?

3. What are the perceived challenges the selected tribal college faces in the future?

Data were collected through the review of archival data collection, interviews of key informants, and analysis of existing data. The findings are presented to answer the research questions addressed earlier.

Overview

The selected tribal community college is located in the upper Midwest in a rural community. The selected tribal community college was chartered by the tribe in the summer of 1979 during what Stein (1992) would call the second

wave of tribal colleges. The location of the selected tribal community college is geographically close to the center of the reservation in which it is located. Tribal housing is located within walking distance from the college and the larger community of approximately 1500 is located seven miles away. Within the borders of the reservation, there are approximately 25,000 non-Indian people (NCA Self-Study, 1994) and 5,400 Native Americans (NCA Self-Study, 1999); this is considered an open reservation. The selected tribal community college serves all individuals within the region.

Post-secondary education has been available on the reservation since 1971 by way of a vocational education program. The vocational education program was linked to the tribal adult education center that offered preparation for high school equivalency. Vocational education first began with instruction in the area of vehicle maintenance. The adult education center continued sporadically through the next seven years to provide high school equivalency tests, and some post-secondary education was offered from three mainstream universities or colleges in the region. During this time, the tribe identified post-secondary education as a priority for it's people.

Historical

Early Years (1978 – 1982)

In 1978, a mainstream university in the region received a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) to study the possibility of creating a college center on the reservation (document review,

1986). Courses were offered from the mainstream university each quarter. Faculty from the university and local residents were involved in teaching these courses.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) conducted a feasibility study for a college on the selected reservation in 1980. The BIA ruled that a college was not feasible. There were five points of rejection. The first was that the selected tribal college provided no transcripts. Second, the selected tribal college had no catalog. The third point was that the selected tribal college had no full-time faculty. Fourth was the fact that there was no audit available, and the fifth point was that it was not geared toward higher education. The Board of Trustees contested this study by identifying that the college was working toward accreditation, had developed transcripts, had developed a catalog, and had been audited. The board also pointed out to the BIA, that without any money it could not afford to hire full-time faculty, thus could not demonstrate that it was geared toward higher education (document review, 1980).

During this time the tribe surveyed the community and found an overwhelming desire for post-secondary education on the reservation. There were three main goals to accomplish during the FIPSE grant period: to continue to develop post-secondary education, to provide for the transition of authority and control of post-secondary education from the mainstream university to the tribe, and to demonstrate feasibility and to establish a free standing community college on the reservation (document review, 1980).

To accomplish the first goal the tribe continued to seek alliances with other mainstream universities or colleges. The selected tribal community college also consulted with other tribal colleges founded earlier for assistance in the development process. While consulting it was acknowledged that each tribal college is different and serves the needs of its individual tribe (personal interview, March 16, 2000), possibly limiting what could be gained from the consultation. In August of 1979, the tribe chartered the tribal community college. The charter created a "popularly-elected" Board of Trustees as the governing body of the selected tribal community college (document review, 1986).

To achieve the second goal the college formed a relationship with a second mainstream state institution in 1981 that provided the selected tribal community college with assistance with course development, an articulation agreement, and assistance with administrative development and training. The relationship allowed the tribal college to receive financial aid for students (personal interview, March 2, 2000). This was also the first year that courses were offered as a part of the tribal community college rather than through the other university. The relationship with the mainstream college continued until 1986 (document review, 1994).

The third goal was accomplished through an agreement between the vocational education program and the tribal community college to share some administrative staff and allow academic credit for some of the vocational

classes being offered. The agreement also included adding two additional trustees to the board to represent the vocational education program (document reviewed, 1986).

Throughout these early years of the community college, the tribe was documenting the need for a higher education facility on the reservation. There was little economic development on the reservation due to the absence of a group of trained tribal members with skills in private sector management. The unemployment rate was as high as 80% with subsidized employment available (document reviewed, 1988). The median educational level on the reservation was 7.8 years in 1976 (document reviewed, 1980).

During the 1978-79 academic year, there were 108 students enrolled, with an average age of 35 (document reviewed, 1980). The selected tribal community college was not chartered yet and classes were offered from the mainstream institution, thus showing the community support for higher education in the community.

When the FIPSE grant lapsed, funds were not available for regular instruction. During this time one faculty person was retained to continue to assist with providing post-secondary education (personal interview, March 10, 2000). In 1981 the college qualified for funds under P.L. 95-471, the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978. These funds formed the financial base for the college. The first president of the college was hired in 1981 with many tasks ahead of him. A mission statement was written that

commited the college "to assist tribal leadership in social and economic development through research, planning, information and referral services, proposal development and management training" (college catalog, 1982-83). Following the mission statement, the college has developed programs that meet the needs of the tribe. The programs that the college has offered have been needed by the tribe. An example of programs in the Associate of Arts degree that have been offered are Business Management, Early Childhood Development, Culture, Chemical Dependency Counseling, Social Services, and General Studies. Programs in the Associate of Applied Sciences have included Secretarial Science, Plumbing, Masonry, Computer Technology, Electrical, and Agriculture. The first graduates of the selected tribal community college graduated in June of 1983. There were four graduates in the first graduating class.

Developing Years (1983 – 1994)

The selected tribal community college achieved North Central Association (NCA) candidacy status in 1984 at the associate degree granting level. The college began working on the recommendations of the NCA team soon after the visit, as full accreditation was required within six years, with visits every two years.

The first step that the selected tribal college took was to increase the number of full-time faculty, with preference in hiring full-time faculty from the part-time faculty already employed. Many of the full-time faculty held advanced

degrees. The college has also strived to have as many qualified Native American faculty as possible. According to the 1986 NCA report, the majority of faculty were still part-time. Of these, two held doctoral degrees, eleven had master's degrees, seven held baccalaureates, and one had traditional expertise in the culture of the tribe. By the time the 1988 NCA report was completed, the instructional staff had equal numbers of full- and part-time staff. Of the seven full-time staff members in 1988, three held bachelor's degrees and four held master's degrees.

There were 15 graduates in 1984. By May of 1985, of the 19 graduates, all but 2 either were employed full-time or were enrolled in four-year programs of higher education (NCA Report, 1986). In the 1990 NCA self-study, it was reported that there had been 111 graduates from the college by that time. Of these graduates, 57 were employed full-time, 26 were continuing their education, 9 former students had received bachelor's degrees, 13 more students were pursuing a four-year degree and planned to complete them in the spring, 3 had master's degrees, and one former student was pursuing a doctorate degree.

In July of 1985 the tribe agreed to a 25 year rent free lease for the college in the vocational education building. The tribe also gave the college income from 160 acres of cropland around the college.

August of 1985 brought the tribal community college's second president. Accreditation remained a critical goal of the college and high priority during this

administration. The second president remained in office for one year, returning to her previous institution. By 1986 it was felt that enrollment at the tribal college had stabilized after rising sharply in the beginning. Some stabilization in funding occurred at this time, since the current year's funding was based on enrollment the previous year. During the terms from Fall 1984 until the Winter term ending in 1988, there was an average of 114 students per term, with a low of 111 in the Fall of 1984 and a high of 204 students in Spring of 1985. This was a period of change for the college as the third president was hired in 1986. A lawsuit arose from the third president being terminated before her three-year contract was up. Informants were unclear of the cause for this action. Written documentation cites that there was a staff complaint "that the President did not involve staff" (document reviewed, 1987). The decision was in favor of the college.

In 1987 a development study was conducted at the selected tribal community college by an independent firm. The report identified respondents' perceived strengths and weaknesses of the college. The perceived strengths and weaknesses of the college are found in Table 4.1. The study concluded that the selected tribal community college was an important educational resource, had a favorable image in the community, and that the college needed to promote itself more in the community (document reviewed, 1987). This study was consistent with NCA self-studies conducted by the selected tribal community college during the same time period.

Table 4.1

Independent Development Study

Strengths	Weaknesses
Good for the community	Non-accredited
Availability to population	Lack of classroom space
Delivers programs and skills	Small alumni body
Source of community pride	Involvement in community
Staff	Extent of curriculum, some courses questionable
Provides employment	Financial stability
Provides cohesiveness between Indian and non-Indians	Public relations/image
Relates to needs of community	Unclear definition as a community college

In 1989, the college started a Nursing program through grant funding from the Kellogg Foundation. The tribe renovated a vacant child care facility to house the Nursing program. This program quickly grew to be one of the largest programs for the college. Other programs were developed as needs arose on the reservation. In 1993 a Casino Management program was developed. There have also been collaborative programs with other mainstream universities in the region and beyond for teacher training programs (document review, December, 1983).

Full accreditation was achieved in 1990. This was an important step for the college and it was achieved in the time frame set by the NCA.

Social-Political Factors

Research question number one was answered through a review of archival data consisting of NCA reports, board of trustee minutes, newspaper

and magazine articles, college catalogs, self-studies, developmental studies and grants. The primary or recurring social-political factors that were identified as having an impact on the tribal college are reported. These factors were supported through interviews. A triangulation of information was used to determine significance. Multiple sources were used to verify the importance of a factor or event. Written data were verified in interview material from more than one source. This study identified five primary factors that have influenced the selected tribal college. These factors are finance, institutional governance, accreditation, family influence, and the cultural impact for the tribe and community.

Finance

The selected tribal college has two consistent sources of funding. The first is the federal government through the Tribally Controlled Community Act of 1978. This act provides funding for tribally controlled community colleges. This funding is handled through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The second source of funding is through tuition. There is a third smaller source of income from some cropland given by the tribal council.

The federal government in 1986 authorized $5,820 per full-time equivalent Indian student to tribal colleges. This full amount has never been allocated to the colleges (Boyer, 1997). The current funding for the 1999-2000 academic year is $3,450 per full-time equivalent Indian student. This is the

largest amount that has been allocated ever. To obtain this funding, students must be enrolled members of a recognized tribe.

Funding for tribal colleges from the federal government is channeled through the Department of the Interior to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). This is different from other public institutions of higher education which are funded through the Department of Education. According to one informant, tribal colleges should not be under the control of the BIA unless there is extensive reform. This informant felt that tribal colleges might be better served if they were under the Department of Education, like other institutions of higher education (personal interview, March 2, 2000).

Funding through the BIA and tuition has never fully covered the expense of the education. There have been many times when the college has had to obtain bank loans or loans from the tribal government to continue to operate (personal interviews, March 2, 2000). There has only been one time when the college has closed for lack of funding, during a summer for one month. There was another time when the college moved to a three-day workweek during the summer to conserve funds. By doing this they were able to reduce the operating expense enough so that no classes were cut in the fall (personal interview, March 2, 2000).

Income from 160 acres of cropland around the college has been consistent through the years. This was given to the college to use as a stable

source of funds through the years (document review, 1980; personal interviews, March 2, 2000).

Tuition is charged to all students. This amount has continued to rise through the years with inflation. The same amount is charged to all students without discrimination regarding race or residency. Tuition waivers are available to elderly students and those in need. The Board of Trustees reviews the applications and determines need. Even when the college was having extreme financial difficulties, tuition waivers were still available to students who were in need and the elderly.

The selected tribal college does not receive any funding from the state for non-Indian students. The state has been approached in past years concerning funding, which has been supported in the state senate, yet there have not been any funds appropriated. While this creates financial hardships for the tribal college, the college does not discriminate against non-Indian students. The college feels that there are benefits of having non-Indian students "to be gained from the social and intellectual contact between the races in the classroom" (NCA Report, 1986).

According to one administrator, approximately 95% of students receive some form of financial aid (personal interview, March 2, 2000). This number seems to stay consistent throughout the years. After being granted candidacy by NCA in 1984, the selected tribal college assumed the operations for its financial aid program in the 1984-85 year. Students are able to receive

grants, loans, and scholarships to assist with funding their education. According to the financial aid director, "lack of funds is generally the main reason that students withdraw from college." The financial aid director reinforced that even though the college might have financial difficulties, if a Native American student wants to attend college but is not eligible for financial aid, the college will work with that student if they make the commitment to their education.

While grant funding is available and is sought after, the tribal college has learned not to rely on this funding. One administrator identified that the college has lost some grant funding which has created financial problems for the college (personal interview, March 2, 2000). Grant funding for the vocational educational program ended in 1993 and was not renewed. This created a hardship for the college and forced the vocational educational program to end in 1994. Also, grants do not cover all of the costs of the program and the hidden costs then add up, creating additional hardships for the college. One example given was the possibility of a grant for technology, but it does not cover the cost of the additional electricity or wiring required. From these experiences and others, the administration has learned not to rely on grants too heavily. Long-range planning needs to be done when looking at grants to determine how to keep programs going after the grant is over. One administrator interviewed stated that grants pull people way from the mission of the college, and that the mission needs to come first (personal interview, March 2, 2000).

Institutional Governance

Tribal Council

In 1979, the tribal council made post-secondary education a priority on this reservation (document review, 1980). They identified education as a way to improve the lives of the people and make a future. Unemployment was high on the reservation, and there were few tribal members trained for any management type positions (document review,1988).

From the beginning when the tribe had little income, the tribal council gave the selected tribal community college 160 acres of crop land that is behind the college building, from which they could take the income to help run the college. The tribal college has continued to receive the income from this land.

When the selected tribal community college was chartered, it was housed with the vocational education school, which had a relatively new building. The community college was soon given a 25 year rent free lease on the building by the tribe (document review, 1983). That lease would have been up within five years from now. The tribe has now given the tribal college a permanent lease on the building for as long as there is a tribal college (personal interview, March 2, 2000).

There have been many times that the selected tribal community college has had financial difficulties and the tribe has assisted. The college runs on a deficit each year and the tribe will come through and help financially as much as possible. When the lawsuit surfaced in 1997 with a ruling for the plaintiffs, the

tribe gave the backing to the tribal college if needed (document review, 1997; personal interview, March 2, 2000). Due to the appeal, this funding was not required, yet this is an example of the tribal commitment to the college.

In the early years of the college, much of the administration was run through the tribal offices due to lack of trained staff at the college (document review, 1980; personal interview, March 2, 2000). This was a savings to the college and allowed time for the tribal college staff to gain necessary training.

Board of Trustees

When the tribal college was founded from its original charter, there were along with the district representatives, two student members. There was no representation from the tribal council in the beginning. The first Board of Trustees adopted the following institutional plans:

1. Application for candidacy status for accreditation from North Central Association of Schools.
2. Request for a feasibility study from the Department of the Interior to become eligible for P.L. 95-471 funds.
3. Identification of Post-Secondary education needs of residents of the reservation.
4. Development and coordination of post-secondary services, community liaison and public relations with the tribal districts.
5. Provide administrative direction, fiscal management and operational direction.

6. Oversee periodic progress reports and evaluations.
7. Develop permanent funding sources for the selected tribal community college. (document reviewed, 1980)

These goals were enough at the time to give direction to the board to assist in the development of the selected tribal community college. From these beginnings the board has developed a handbook over time containing by-laws, the charter and other pertinent information (document reviewed,1980). The Board of Trustees presently consists of one representative from each district on the reservation, one representative from the tribal council, and one student representative.

Issues with the Board of Trustees have arisen at different points in the selected tribal community college's history. The question may be asked in some circumstances of whether the issue is with the Board of Trustees or elsewhere. From interviews and a review of the documents, it appears as though a great deal of the conflict lies within the Board of Trustees. One informant who is employed at the college stated that he/she feels that the problems that arise out of the board are due to a lack of vision (personal interview, March 15, 2000). As one past administrator quoted another, "the point of greatest vulnerability is the Board of Trustees" (personal interview, March 16, 2000).

There have been concerns voiced about the Board of Trustees since the beginning of the college. Conflicts have arisen between the administration of

the college and the Board of Trustees throughout the years. As one informant stated, "the problem is when there is a weak administration and a strong board, the board will take control" (personal interview, March 2, 2000). There has been a desire to have the administration of the college controlled by members of the tribe or reservation on which it is located. This was a challenge in the beginning when there was no local expertise in the area of higher education.

There have been two lawsuits filed against the college due to actions of the board. Both of these were due to firing or not renewing contacts of administrative staff. In both cases judgement was for the college.

Some examples of issues that have risen due to the Board of Trustees are the non-renewal of contracts for non-Indians, over-spending the budget, and mirco-managing (document reviewed, 1996; personal interview, March 2, 2000). The most recent time that these issues arose was with a threat to the tribal college's accreditation.

According to the 1999 self-study for NCA concerning the issues that arose in 1996, "the president at the time and several board members were actively pursuing a course of official conduct that was allegedly designed to remove non-Indians from teaching and administrative positions with the community college" (document reviewed, 1999). Conflict was great at this time with the staff and faculty on one side, and the president and board on the other side of the conflict. At this point, the tribal council stepped in and the Board of Trustees was suspended and not allowed to go to the tribal college. The

charter was amended and an election was held a few months later (document reviewed, 1996). There have been no further issues with the board (personal interview, March 2, 2000). The president also resigned at this time as well. These conflicts were partly created out of unclear guidelines and not following the guidelines set before the board.

Administration

There have been eight presidents of this selected tribal community college since 1981. The fifth president was acting for approximately six months, while the Board of Trustees conducted a search for a permanent president. The president position has been equally divided between males and females. Five presidents were members of the sponsoring tribe, two of which did not live on the reservation prior to taking the position; two were members of other tribes; and one was non-Indian.

Only three of the presidents served terms longer than two years, and three served one year or less. The first, fourth, and eighth presidents have held their terms for over two years in length. Periods of stability have been followed with periods of high turnover.

Mostly Native Americans have filled the other positions in the administration at the selected tribal college. The exception to this came in the early and mid 1990s when the Grant Administrator and Dean of Instruction were both non-Indians. As stated previously, this resulted in the two administrators not having contracts renewed and eventually a lawsuit against the college. The

last ruling was in favor of the college, yet there still could be another appeal (personal interview, March 15, 2000).

Accreditation

Accreditation was a goal of the selected tribal community college from the time of the charter (document review, 1980). The selected tribal community college applied for candidacy in 1983 from North Central Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NCA) and candidacy was granted in 1984 (document review, 1984). The tribal college had six years to achieve full accreditation. They were to complete a self-study and have an accreditation visit every two years while they held candidacy status.

The importance of accreditation has never been lost for the selected tribal community college. After each visit, recommendations were reviewed and improvements made to the college. Preparation for the next review began just after the previous one was completed (document review, 1990).

In 1997 when there was turmoil between the faculty and staff of the college and the Board of Trustees, the tribal council stepped in when accreditation was threatened by these actions. The council amended the charter in an attempt to keep the board in place and not threaten accreditation again. It is felt that with the amended charter, the board will not threaten the accreditation of the college again. With the amendment to the charter, the tribal council will step in if accreditation is threatened. When the charter was

amended, one member of the tribal council was placed on the Board of Trustees as a way to monitor activity and guard against problems before they escalate (personal interview, March 15, 2000). Tribal colleges must be accredited or in candidacy status in order to join the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) (personal interview, March 2, 2000).

Family Influence

From the first administration, there were issues with family power or connections (document reviewed, 1984). There was an issue with two sisters who both worked at the tribal college, which led to the college reviewing the tribe's regulations on employees who are relatives. It was not clear from documents reviewed or through interviews that a policy was developed or followed.

It was clear, however, from interviews that family power or influence has had an effect on the college. Political protection was the term used by one informant. This person stated that if an employee of the college had a relative on the tribal council, the college then had protection from political attacks (personal interview, March 16, 2000). This could also work in reverse; if an employee required disciplinary action, then the college would be in disfavor, and could receive pressure from the related council member. Another informant used the term family power, but stated the same issues.

One informant stated the family issue in another way. This person talked about cliques that form due to family, and that this influences the college. This

person stated that this is a problem with the Board of Trustees having family members at the college (personal interview, March 15, 2000).

Cultural Impact

Through the interview process, each person was asked what he or she found as the strengths and weaknesses or challenges for the college. Aside from the factors listed above as social–political factors that have affected the selected tribal community college, others were also given.

One such factor that the informants felt is important is that the college is seen as a bridge between the two cultures. In two interviews the college was seen as a place where discrimination does not happen. It is a place where cultures can learn from each other, and in the classroom all opinions or ideas are valued. One staff member interviewed stated that when talking to a graduating student who was non-Indian, the student stated that all people in the community should take the culture classes (personal interview, March 9, 2000). This was a way to learn about the other culture in the community, which can reduce stereotypes. One staff member interviewed did not see the college fulfilling this role.

The cultural courses are viewed as a tool for the preservation of tribal culture. The college has been able to develop courses to preserve the culture of the tribe. The tribal college has developed an archive for the history of the tribe that continues to grow.

Growth

Another issue that was addressed concerns the growth of the college. The growth of the tribal community college has been a positive statement for the college and the tribe. Where there was skepticism in the past, the college is now viewed as a tool for growth. For many Native Americans, education was a tool to strip the Indian of who they were. A statement made in a Plan for Assessment in 1995 made the commitment of faculty to students quite clear:

> In fulfilling its mission, the selected tribal community college must be comprehensive in nature, providing to the fullest extent possible, an education that responds to the unique qualities, abilities, and potential of each student in a stimulating environment that enhances the total development of the individual. It is recognized that this task can be accomplished in an environment that reflects the integrity of the individual, the involvement of the community, mutual respect between students and staff, and the principle of free inquiry and expression.

Most of those interviewed felt that the college has had an impact on the community. Many more tribal members hold full-time jobs and are educated than before the tribal college began. There are more tribal members employed within the community and in good positions. Many of the employees at the community college were once students there.

Demographic Profiles

Research question number two identifies the demographic profiles of the students, faculty, and administration of the selected tribal college during the last 20 years. This research question was answered by reviewing statistical data gathered for NCA reports, and data gathered by the researcher on students from four separate years.

Student Profiles

For the purpose of this study a random sample of 40 students was taken in 4 different years (total of 160) to determine the demographics of students and identify any possible trends. Samples were taken from 1983, 1988, 1993, and 1997. Results of these samples are reported in table 4.2.

The mean age of students varied between years with no clear pattern emerging from the data. There was a considerable rise in average age of the random sample students between 1993 (29.2) and 1997 (35.9). NCA reports indicate the average age of students reached a high point in 1986, at 33 years old, but has declined since that time. The registrar stated that the average age of students has continued to decrease; it was 28 years of age in 1994 and is still declining. This is in contrast to what the random sample found.

Table 4.2

Demographic Information from Random Samples

Year	Mean Age	Gender M	Gender F	Mean GPA	Tribal Affiliation Yes	Tribal Affiliation No	Graduated
1983	30.6	21	20	1.83	41	0	9
1988	32.8	20	20	2.56	33	7	17
1993	29.2	13	27	2.82	23	17	9
1997	35.9	8	32	3.02	16	24	6

The gender of students has changed through the years, as in mainstream institutions. The college is increasingly seeing more female students as evidenced in Table 4.2. There has been a visible increase in the number of female students from the beginning of the college to the present time. As one informant stated, they need to try to do more to attract male students. He stated that the women who come to the college view education as a way of making their lives better (March 15, 2000). A recent article in a regional newspaper stated, "Women outnumber men almost two to one in the tribal college classrooms and some of those graduates could have a dramatic effect on future tribal organization" (document reviewed, March 30, 2000). The female students are often single mothers.

Mean student grade point average (GPA) rose through the years from 1.83 in 1983 to 3.02 in 1997. As the college developed, services to students also increased. One informant stated that the tribal college works with students

to help them succeed in school (personal correspondence, March 21, 2000). There is a learning lab that tests students to identify the skill level the student enters with so they can register for the correct level of classes. In areas such as math and science, this can help students have success in higher education, which will motivate them to continue. The selected tribal college also offers a class in life skills, which includes how to take notes and read textbooks efficiently to improve success.

The number of non-Indian students also increased through time from none in the first sample in 1983 to 60% in the 1997 sample. This was a gradual change through the years. The percentage of non-Indian students in the 1997 sample (60%) was significantly higher than the percentage in the 1999 NCA self-study (estimated at 22%). Throughout the NCA reports up to 1994, 80% of the students were tribal members with between 3 and 10% from other tribes, and up to 17% were non-Indian. In the last NCA report (1999) it was reported that there were an average of 22% non-Indian students attending the selected tribal college. There were up to12 tribes represented at this tribal college at any one time through the years.

The number of graduates of the selected tribal community college has changed through time. There have been a total of 386 graduates of the college since the first graduation in1983. The number of graduates reached a high point in 1996 with 44 graduates. The number of graduates has been down since then, yet the college is still recovering from the turmoil the college faced

during the two school years between 1995 and 1997. The 1997-98 academic year had a decrease in the number of full-time students (105) and a rise in the number of part time students (94) compared to the year before (128 and 70 respectively).

The number of students enrolled at the college was difficult to obtain. Numbers of students not duplicated in the count were given in the 1983 NCA report, but were not given in any subsequent reports. The number of students enrolled during in the 1993-94 academic year was 326, which was obtained from the registrar (March 31, 2000). Most students (70-80%) who attend the selected tribal community college were single and lived with dependents. The student body was evenly divided between students with high school diplomas and those with GEDs. Of the students attending in 1986, 40% had attended other higher education institutions.

Through many of the NCA reports it was identified that as many as 95% of the students were receiving some form of financial aid. Eighty-five percent fell below the national average income.

Faculty Profiles

It is difficult to identify trends in the faculty profiles, as can be seen in Table 4.3. Data were not available through NCA reports on faculty until 1988. According to one informant, who is a past administrator, approximately 40% of the teaching staff were Native American at the time the college began (personal interview, March 16, 2000). This informant could not recall the number of full-

time faculty. The 1988 NCA report identified a faculty that was 50% part time (7) and 50% full-time. Of the full-time faculty, 57% had their master's degree.

In 1990 the number of full-time faculty increased above the number of part-time faculty. Cohen and Brawer (1996) identify this as a positive move for stability in community colleges. In 1990, 63% of the faculty were full-time. Yet, by 1994 the number of part-time faculty increased above the number of full-time (17, 14 respectively) and has stayed this way, with 59% of the faculty in 1999 being part-time.

The 1994 self-study gave a more comprehensive summary of faculty demographics by including ethnic background. The educational background of full-time faculty was reported in all NCA reports and self-studies, yet the part-time faculty qualifications were not included in most. The educational level of the faculty at the selected tribal community college is similar to what Cohen and Brawer found in their research from some of the earlier years of community colleges (1996). Bachelor's and master's degrees tend to be the predominant levels of education for faculty. In 1999 there were equal numbers of these degrees. After the 1999 NCA report was written, three faculty completed their master's degrees (documents reviewed, 1999).

One informant discussed the difficulty of hiring and keeping faculty with higher degrees (personal interview, March 9, 2000). The informant stated that due to the size and isolation of the community it is difficult to find people who

will move to the area. Low salaries were identified as another difficulty in hiring faculty from outside the area.

Table 4.3

Faculty Demographics

Year	Full Time	Part Time	Educational degrees of Full-time Faculty					Ethnicity	
			Diploma	A.A	B.S.	M.S.	Doctorate	Indian	Non-Indian
1988	7	7	0	0	3	4	0		--
1990	12	7	4	0	3	5	0		--
1994	14	17	6	0	0	8	0	3	11
1999	11	16	0	1	5	5	0	3	8

-- Data not available

Administration Profiles

Of the eight presidents of the tribal college, only the first was not Native American. The second and fourth presidents were not members of tribe that founded the selected tribal college. All other presidents (5), including one who was acting president for approximately six months, have been members of the founding tribe. Two of these five presidents had not lived on the reservation for some time prior to accepting the position as president.

Documentation for the other positions was not accessible, but through informants, it appears as though the Dean of Instruction has been Native American with the exception of 1992-1995 when there was a non-Indian in the position. The position of comptroller has been filled with a non-Indian since 1984 with the exception of 1996-1998. The comptroller returned after having

been fired during administrative upheaval. The person currently in this position is the most qualified for the position according to one informant. The majority of others who could be considered administrative staff have been Native American.

Many of the remaining staff at the selected tribal college are graduates of the college. The majority of these staff are Native American and members of the sponsoring tribe.

Perceived Challenges for the Future

To answer research question number three, individuals interviewed were asked to identify what they saw as challenges that lie ahead for the college in the coming years. Of the responses given there were three recurring themes.

Funding

Future funding for the college was an issue for all people interviewed. While funding is stable now, it is low. One informant stated that if the amount authorized to the tribal colleges in the Tribally Controlled Community College Act were actually allocated there would be less turmoil each year (personal interview, March 2, 2000). If the college received $5,820 per full-time equivalent Indian student, the college would be able to provide a quality education without having to concentrate so much time with funding. This informant also stated that it would help if the tribe would commit to an amount each year that the college could rely on. The tribe has been willing to assist the college when funds are needed, yet they are reluctant to commit.

Four-year degrees

The selected tribal community college would like to offer four-year degrees in the near future (personal interviews, March 2, 15, & 17, 2000). The administration has been working on this plan for a few years. When the tribal college first started there were a few students who were able to obtain four-year degrees with the other mainstream universities and colleges that were bringing their programs into the community. This enabled students to obtain a four-year degree without leaving the community.

In 1995, the president of the selected tribal community college identified that there were funds available for the Kellogg Foundation to tribal colleges as planning funds to move from a two- to a four-year institution (document reviewed, 1995). This funding was not pursued due to the overwhelming conflicts at the tribal college at the time. As the college has achieved a level of stability since that time, it is again a high priority for the selected tribal community college (personal interview, March 2, 2000).

Cultural Education and Preservation

It is a goal for some at the tribal college to further develop the curriculum of the tribal college to have a more holistic approach to teaching and include aspects of the tribal culture throughout all course work (personal interview, March 15, 2000). One informant stated that there should be teacher training offered at the college for all who teach on the reservation, from Head Start, up through the tribal school and community college levels. Another informant was

working on a grant for developing a language program that would also be inclusive, starting at Head Start and working up through the schools, but also including parents (personal interview, March 9, 2000). These informants identified the need to keep the culture alive and to pass it on. Part of the role of tribal colleges is the preservation of the culture for future generations. A cultural center is being built at the selected tribal college at the present time. The archives have developed and are constantly growing in an attempt to preserve the history of the tribe. While this study was being conducted the researcher had the opportunity to observe materials brought in to the archivist to add to the collection.

Summary

The tribal community college has been in existence for over 20 years and has graduated approximately 386 students. Many of these students have continued their education at four-year institutions or are fully employed. During the 20 years the tribal college has been in existence, it has faced some social-political factors or issues that have had an impact on the college.

The first factor found was financial. The selected tribal college struggles to make ends meet. Often times these ends do not meet and the college needs assistance from the tribe. While the federal government authorized $5,820 per full-time Indian student in 1986, this amount has never been allocated to the colleges. The current year's funding was $3,450, which is the highest amount

ever allocated per Indian student. There is no funding allocated from the federal or state government for non-Indian students attending the tribal college.

The second factor found was the influence of institutional governance. There are three local levels of governance that affect the college. The tribal council, the Board of Trustees, and the administration at the college all have potential to influence the running of the college. The tribal college has encountered both positive and negative relationships with these entities. Issues arise often with personality differences between the different groups. The most difficulty that the selected tribal college has encountered has been with the Board of Trustees concerning level of involvement with management of the college and staff.

Factor three is accreditation. This has been found as a driving force for the college and continues to remain a primary goal. The tribal college and a number of the individual programs are accredited.

The fourth factor or issue that has impacted the college is family influence. This was evident in written documentation and reinforced through interviews. Other terms used for this factor included political protection and nepotism. One informant identified this as either a positive or negative position for the college depending on the circumstance, while another questioned the appropriateness of it at all, yet acknowledge the impact it has had.

The last factor identified was the cultural impact the college has had on the community and tribe. The college is seen by some as a bridge between the

two cultures, a place that brings the two together and encourages acceptance for both cultures. Another factor with culture is the preservation of the culture and passing this knowledge on to future generations. The college is building a cultural center and has developed an archive for tribal history.

The demographic profiles of the students at the college reveals that changes have occurred, including an increase in females through the years. Along with this, there are still high numbers of students with dependents who live with them. There has been and increase in GPA as the college has grown. The age of students tends to fluctuate, yet would still be considered non-traditional when compared to mainstream institutions. At least 95% of students receive some form of financial aid.

The demographic profile of the faculty has changed little through the years. The teaching faculty is predominantly non-Indian. The educational level of the faculty may be improving somewhat with recent faculty development. Recruitment is considered difficult due to the rural area and salary range. The administrative staff has been predominantly Native American. There have been eight presidents at the tribal college, four of whom have been women. Three of the presidents have had terms longer than two years, providing times of stabilization after some high turnover periods.

There were three perceived challenges for the future of the selected tribal college. The first challenge is funding. The second challenge is the development of a four-year degree program. This has been a goal of the

college for a number of years that the administration is now working towards. The third challenge is cultural education. It is a goal of the administration and others to have the culture taught in a holistic manner, with the possibility of immersion at some point. The goal for this is to provide cultural education in all stages of the life cycle for all Native Americans. Teacher education for all faculty is also critical so that the culture is apparent in all classes taught at the college.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations

Chapter 5 will give a brief summary of this research project. It will provide an overview of the study including the literature review, methodology, and the results. The chapter will then continue with conclusions from the study followed by discussion. The chapter will conclude with recommendations for future research.

Summary

Education for Native American people has been tainted with a history of forced education and assimilation by the European American educational system. Tribal colleges have been able to assist tribes in meeting the needs for higher education for Native American people in an environment that is more conducive to various learning styles, and begin an educational process to preserve tribal culture. Part of the mission statement of each tribal college is "the will to preserve, enhance and promote the language and culture of its tribe is central to its existence" (Stein, 1992a, p. 89).

The purpose of this study was to identify the social-political factors that have affected a tribal community college located in the upper Midwest, and to identify the perceived challenges the college faces in the future. This study also developed a profile of the students, faculty, and staff that is representative of the selected tribal college. This study developed a time line of events from the founding of the college to the present time.

The research questions addressed in this study are as follows:

1. What social-political events have impacted the selected tribal college during the past 20 years?

2. What has been the demographic profile of students, faculty and administration at the selected tribal college during the past 20 years?

3. What are the perceived challenges the selected tribal college faces in the future?

Literature Review

Higher education in America has been influenced by the European higher education system, yet America was founded on the belief that "all men" are created equal. These two systems are not equal yet have learned from each other. Higher education in the United States has been influenced by many events in the history of our country.

A major social-political event driving higher education was World War II. In 1947, after World War II had ended, higher education began to grow (Trow, 1989/1991). As individuals returned home from the war, many needed to be retrained or educated for new professions. Having served their country, the government in return provided them with assistance for education with the Veteran's Readjustment Act, otherwise known as the G.I. Bill, creating growth in higher education. Many Native Americans who served their country during the war took advantage of the G.I. Bill to further their education. After obtaining a higher education some returned to their reservations and became instrumental in laying the ground work for the foundation of tribal colleges.

Research indicates that tribal colleges are meeting the needs of tribes across the country. There are low numbers of Native American students who graduate from predominantly "white" colleges and universities across the country. The number of Native American graduates from tribal colleges is much greater. Boyer's research on tribal colleges, with the assistance of the Carnegie Foundation, brought increased awareness across the United States of issues that are faced by tribal colleges. The recommendations made in the Carnegie report urge government, corporations, non-Indian institutions, and individuals to become more involved to ensure the growth of tribal colleges.

Methodology

The population for this study was the selected college, which was inclusive of the students, faculty, and staff who have worked at or attended the selected college, as well as the tribe who sponsors the college. These people were found through written documentation about the college and through personal interviews. The research covered over a 20-year period of the selected tribal college's history from its beginning to the present time. Multiple sources of information were used to gather data. This study used existing data on the college from student files, NCA reports, board of trustee minutes, historical data, news articles, and other pertinent materials found. Interviews were conducted with seven key informants identified through documents or interviews. Additional information was gathered through the registrar and archivist.

A random sample of 40 students' records from 4 different years, 1983, 1988, 1993 and 1997 (160 students) were reviewed to determine trends in demographics of students. The demographics that were reviewed include: age of students, gender, tribal affiliation, GPA, whether students graduated, and whether these students were considered full- or part-time according to the standards set by the college.

Faculty profiles were reviewed through use of NCA reports. Documentation was reviewed to obtain data on educational levels, employment as full or part-time faculty, and tribal affiliation. Administration profiles were found in archival data of NCA reports, news articles and other documentation, and supplemented with interview research.

The perceived challenges of the selected tribal college were determined through the interview process. These challenges were identified by a number of people.

Findings

The selected tribal college was chartered in 1979 during the second wave of tribal colleges (Stein, 1992b). The college is located in the upper Midwest in a rural community. Higher education opportunities had been available to the community during the 1970s through a mainstream university in the region. The mainstream university, through a FIPSE grant, assisted in determining the need for a community college on the reservation and coordinated classes as needed.

Tribal commitment to higher education was strong, even when the BIA conducted a feasibility study determining that the tribe could not support a community college. The Board of Trustees contested the study and the tribal college continued its development. The tribal council developed goals for the college and proceeded to work towards them. Throughout these early years, the tribe continued to document the need for higher education on the reservation. These needs included the high unemployment rate, low educational level of tribal members, and the need to bring opportunities onto the reservation.

The tribal community college has been in existence for over 20 years and has graduated approximately 386 students. Many of these students have continued their education at four-year institutions or are fully employed. During the 20 years, the tribal college has faced some social-political factors or issues that have had an impact on the college.

The first factor found was financial. The selected tribal college struggles to make ends meet. Often times these ends do not meet and the college needs assistance from the tribe. While the federal government authorized $5,820 per full time Indian student in 1986, this amount has never been allocated to the colleges. The current year's funding was $3,450, which is the highest amount ever allocated per Indian student. There is no funding allocated for non-Indian students.

The second factor found was the influence of institutional governance. Three local levels of governance affect the college. The tribal council, the

Board of Trustees, and the administration at the college all have potential to influence the running of the college. The tribal college has encountered both positive and negative relationships with these entities. Issues arise often with personality differences between the different groups. The most difficulty that the selected tribal college has encountered has been with the Board of Trustees concerning level of involvement with management of the college and staff.

Factor three is accreditation. This has been found as a driving force for the college and continues to remain a primary goal.

The fourth factor or issue that has impacted the college has been family influence. This was evident in written documentation and reinforced through interviews. Other terms used for this factor included political protection and nepotism. One informant identified that this could be either a positive position for the college or negative. Another informant questioned the appropriateness of it at all, yet acknowledge the impact it has had.

The last factor identified was the cultural impact the college has had on the community and tribe. The college is seen by some as a bridge between the two cultures, a place that brings the two together and encourages acceptance of both cultures. Another factor with culture is the preservation of the culture and passing this knowledge on to future generations. The college is building a cultural center and has developed an archive for tribal history.

The demographic profiles of the students at the college have seen changes with an increase in females through the years. There are a high numbers of students with dependents who live with them. There has been an

increase in GPA as the college has grown. The age of students tends to fluctuate, yet would still be considered non-traditional when compared to mainstream institutions. At least 95% of students receive some form of financial aid.

The demographic profile of the faculty has changed little through the years. The teaching faculty is predominantly non-Indian. The educational level of the faculty may be improving somewhat with recent faculty development. Recruitment is considered difficult due to the rural area and salary range. The administrative staff has been predominantly Native American. There have been eight presidents at the tribal college, four of whom have been women. Three of the presidents have had terms longer than two years, providing times of stabilization after some high turnover periods.

There were three perceived challenges for the future of the selected tribal college. The first challenge is funding. The second challenge is the development of a four-year degree program. This has been a goal of the college for a number of years that the administration is now working towards. The third challenge is cultural education. It is a goal of the administration and other informants to have the culture taught in a holistic manner, with the possibility of immersion at some point. The goal for this is to provide cultural education in all stages of the life cycle. Teacher education for the faculty is also critical so that the culture is apparent in all classes taught at the college.

Conclusions

The following conclusions have been drawn from this research study:

1. Funding from federal and local sources for the selected tribal college is inadequate. Funding is considered a continual issue for the selected tribal college.

2. The Governance structures can be problematic due to being tightly coupled to each other.

3. Accreditation has strongly influenced and guided the tribal college through its development.

4. Native American faculty continue to be under-represented at the selected tribal college.

5. Although women and non-traditional students are well represented at the college, there is a concern that male and traditional students are under-represented.

6. Education and preservation of the tribal culture are primary goals for the college.

Discussion

Funding

The selected tribal college is often in a battle to survive due to inadequate funding. Funding from the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act is distributed to tribal colleges based on the college's full-time equivalent Indian student count. The Indian student count only includes those students who are enrolled members of a tribe that is recognized by the federal government. The other main source of funding for operating expenses comes from tuition. Since there is neither nor federal or state funding for non-Indian

students, when the number of non-Indian students rises, this increases the expense, yet there are no funds to cover this expense. The value of having the college open to all cultures is not measurable, yet is evident throughout the interviews conducted for this research.

Tuition is charged to all students equally. While this amount helps with the cost of education, it does not cover the cost of both faculty and facilities. If these same non-Indian or Indian students attended a state institution, that institution would receive state tax dollars to support the education they received.

Other funding comes from grants for specific programs. As two informants stated, grant funding is difficult due to continuation of a program after the funding is gone, and grants pull people from their mission at the college.

When applying Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a person cannot move on to areas at the top such as belonging or self-fulfillment if the basic needs such as safety and survival issues have not been met. The same principle applies to the selected tribal college, that when there is always a struggle to survive financially, it is difficult to envision improvements, and expansion. Yet, as seen in this study, the selected tribal college continues to strive to achieve and improve.

Both state and federal governments need to provide funding. The federal government needs to allocate the full amount that was authorized in 1986 and increase this amount to meet inflation. The state needs to

acknowledge that the tribal colleges are land grant institutions and fund the non-Indian students and others who are not enrolled tribal members at the same level as state institutions. The selected tribal college is a community college that serves all people in the community, thus qualifying as a public institution.

Governance

Institutional governance is an area that has many interesting facets. As one informant stated, the tribal colleges that distance themselves from tribal authority, and are run as higher education institutions rather than as tribal programs, are the successful ones (personal interview, March 16, 2000). This statement is in accordance with Boyer (1997), who stated that "most tribal colleges try to keep an arm's length from their tribal governments, recognizing that administrative autonomy is necessary for both accreditation and their own stability" (p. 27). What Boyer and the informant identify is a loose coupling between the entities of governance, allowing for some autonomy for the college to maintain educational standards. Problems develop when the different entities become tightly coupled, thus allowing for micro-management from the other entities.

The selected tribal college has had difficulties with the Board of Trustees. There are many possible reasons for this; one informant stated that when there has been a weak president the board would take control. The board took control at least once when there was no evidence of a weakness, yet high turnover on the board created opportunity out of a possible lack of

understanding. One informant stated that when the board lacks an understanding of or appreciation for higher education this creates lack of support for the administration and staff. The informant stated that while the college has been there 20 years, they are still seeing many students who are first generation students, often due to a lack of trust in the education system. As time goes by, the Board of Trustees is developing a better understanding of the college and some have even been students (personal interview, March 15, 2000).

The tribal council has been supportive of the college since the beginning. Now there is a good relationship with the council. The addition of a council member on the Board of Trustees assists both the college and the council to monitor activities. This could be a fine line between control and support depending on the situation and the people involved.

Native American Faculty

There appears to be a lack of qualified Native American faculty to teach. There seems to be a vicious cycle of how to get Native American faculty. Data on retention state that students need role models, yet to get the role models students have to persist in order to become role models for future generations. The president of the college has a Ph.D. and teaches a class. The dean of instruction has a master's degree and also teaches classes. These two individuals realize the importance of their teaching and make the time to commit to teaching as well as administration.

According to Boyer (1997), most instructors at tribal colleges are non-Indian. The selected tribal college seems to follow this trend. It is difficult for the selected tribal college to hire faculty to come into the community. The college has a number of faculty who commute from surrounding communities and one commutes as far as 100 miles to teach at the college.

Qualified Native Americans can obtain higher paying positions off the reservation. Some colleges are beginning programs to help individuals gain the education, and, in return, these individuals return to teach (Boyer, 1997). The use of such a program could ensure the increase of Native American teachers and become a trend in the future.

Student Enrollment

When the selected tribal college began there was an even distribution between male and female students. The number of female students has increased through time to a point where the selected tribal college has approximately two-thirds female students. The average student at the college has been in their lower thirties with dependents. The trend has changed somewhat; presently the average age of students has declined, and the number with dependents has declined. According to one informant, 90% of the tribal high school graduates enrolled in the tribal college this past year (personal communication, March 30, 2000). The women who attend the tribal colleges are often single mothers who are tying to find support for their families through education to get off welfare (Boyer, 1997). The tribal college allows these

students the opportunity to gain the education without having to leave the support system of family and friends.

Concern arises over the low enrollment of male students at the selected tribal college, which seems to be the trend at tribal colleges (Boyer, 1997; Document reviewed, March 30, 2000). This can lead to some implications for the future. One implication would be the possibility of more women becoming involved with tribal government. These positions tend to be male dominated at the present time where the selected tribal college is located. It is important to understand what the cultural implications would be. Another implication would be the event of more women moving away from the reservation in search of opportunities after they graduate if none are available where they live.

Cultural Preservation

The tribal college plays an essential role in the preservation of the tribal culture. Concerns arise over the loss of Native languages, yet this tribal college, like others, is finding new and innovative ways of teaching the tribal language to keep it alive. Along with teaching the language, they are teaching respect for the culture and the language to keep the language pure. As one informant stated, you can not just teach the language, but you have to teach culture with it so the students understand the importance behind it and do not abuse the language. The selected tribal college is working with the tribe to teach the culture and language from early childhood through the life span. The college has acknowledged that to preserve the culture and language, the concept can not be taught at one level with the expectation that once is enough.

There needs to be a holistic approach so at some point enough people are modeling the lifestyle of respect for the culture and language, to ensure social learning.

Commitment of Faculty and Staff

All institutions of higher education develop a culture within the institution. The culture at the selected tribal college is one that would resemble a family. The faculty, staff and administration are all highly committed to the college and the students. Through documents reviewed, interviews and experience with the college, the commitment of those who work at this tribal college is evident. The goal is to provide quality higher education to the community and to help provide students with the skills needed for their futures. The staff has remained focused through many difficult times both financially and politically, yet they continue to be dedicated to fulfilling the mission of the college.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Practice

1. The college needs to seek sources of stable funding.
2. The college should continue to recruit more Native American faculty.
3. The college should develop methods of recruiting more male and younger students.
4. The college needs to continue to stabilize relationships between governing entities.
5. The college should continue developing a comprehensive cultural program.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations are made for future research.

1. Replicate study at other tribal colleges.

2. Survey students to determine reasons for attending the selected college and to determine if they are seeking a degree. This survey should also include demographic information.

3. Survey faculty to identify trends in education, employment status, and ethnic backgrounds. This survey should obtain employment history with the institution, demographic information, and open-ended questions about teaching at the tribal college.

4. Explore funding sources of tribal colleges across the country.

5. Explore different models of governance to determine the best fit for the selected tribal college.

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Appendix A

Institutional Permission

A CASE STUDY OF THE SOCIAL-POLITICAL FACTORS EVIDENT IN THE DEVELOMENT OF A SELECTED TRIBAL COLLEGE

As administrator of Sisseton-Wahpeton Community College, I grant permission to Donna Lehmkuhl to conduct a research study of the college. I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the procedures to be followed and agree to these procedures.

_____ _____

Administrator's Signature Date

_____ _____

Researcher's Signature Date

Appendix B

Native American

Educational View

Appendix C

Questions developed

from Boyer material

Interview Form

Guiding questions for interviews taken from Boyer's (1990), criteria for a quality tribal college:

1. The good tribal college must encourage a smooth transition for students entering their institutions.

What services do you provide for new students entering this college to help them adjust to the new environment?

2. Academic and social support must be offered to all students.

Are there student activities, and tutoring programs available?

3. Must offer all students a general education that provides skills for life.

What is the core curriculum like, and what do you see as its benefits to students?

4. Should emphasize good teaching and reward good teachers.

Could you tell me about the teaching staff? How many full and part time staff? Is good teaching emphasized and how? How are teachers rewarded?

5. Must clearly define its relationship with the tribal government.

What type of relationship do you have with tribal government? How much involvement does the tribal council have with the college?

6. Evaluate student outcomes. (pg. 13-17)

How do you evaluate student outcomes? Do you know what the employment rate is for graduates? Are you aware of how many graduates remain in this area?

Appendix D

Interview Guide

General Questions

Sample interview questions

1. What is/was your role with the college?

2. How long have you been affiliated with the college?

   Or, How long were you affiliated with the college?

3. What social-political events do you feel have had an impact on the community college?

4. Do you feel that any of these events have shaped or changes the college today?

5. Do you feel that the college has impacted the community and how?

6. What direction do you see the college going in the next five to ten years?

7. What challenges do feel the college will face in the future?

Appendix E

Human Subjects Approval

Identifying the social-political factors that have been evident in the development of a selected tribal college

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a study being conducted by Donna Lehmkuhl, a doctoral student in the Adult and Higher Education Program, University of South Dakota under the direction of Dr. Karen Card. This study will examine the social-political factors that have had an impact on the selected tribal college, and the perceived issues that the college faces in the future. The purpose of this study is to accurately record the factors that have affected the college in the past 20 years.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw at anytime and request your recorded interview upon withdrawal. The interview will be kept to 30-90 minutes. The interview will be tape-recorded for accuracy. All interviews and archival records containing sensitive personal information will be kept confidential. Only the researcher (Donna Lehmkuhl) will have access to the tape-recorded interviews. The tapes will be transcribed and names will be changed during transcription for confidentiality. The tape-recorded interviews will be destroyed within six months after all interviews are completed.

If you have any questions about this study, or would like more information, please contact Donna Lehmkuhl, 605-692-8385, or Dr. Karen Card, 605-677-5815. If you have any questions about your rights as a human subject please contact Dr. James Richardson, Chair, Human Subjects Committee, Research Compliance Office, University of South Dakota, 605-677-6184. You will receive a copy of this form.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date
I certify that I am over 18 years of age
and wish to participate in this study

_____ _____

Signature of Researcher Date